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# ECHOES AND REALITIES

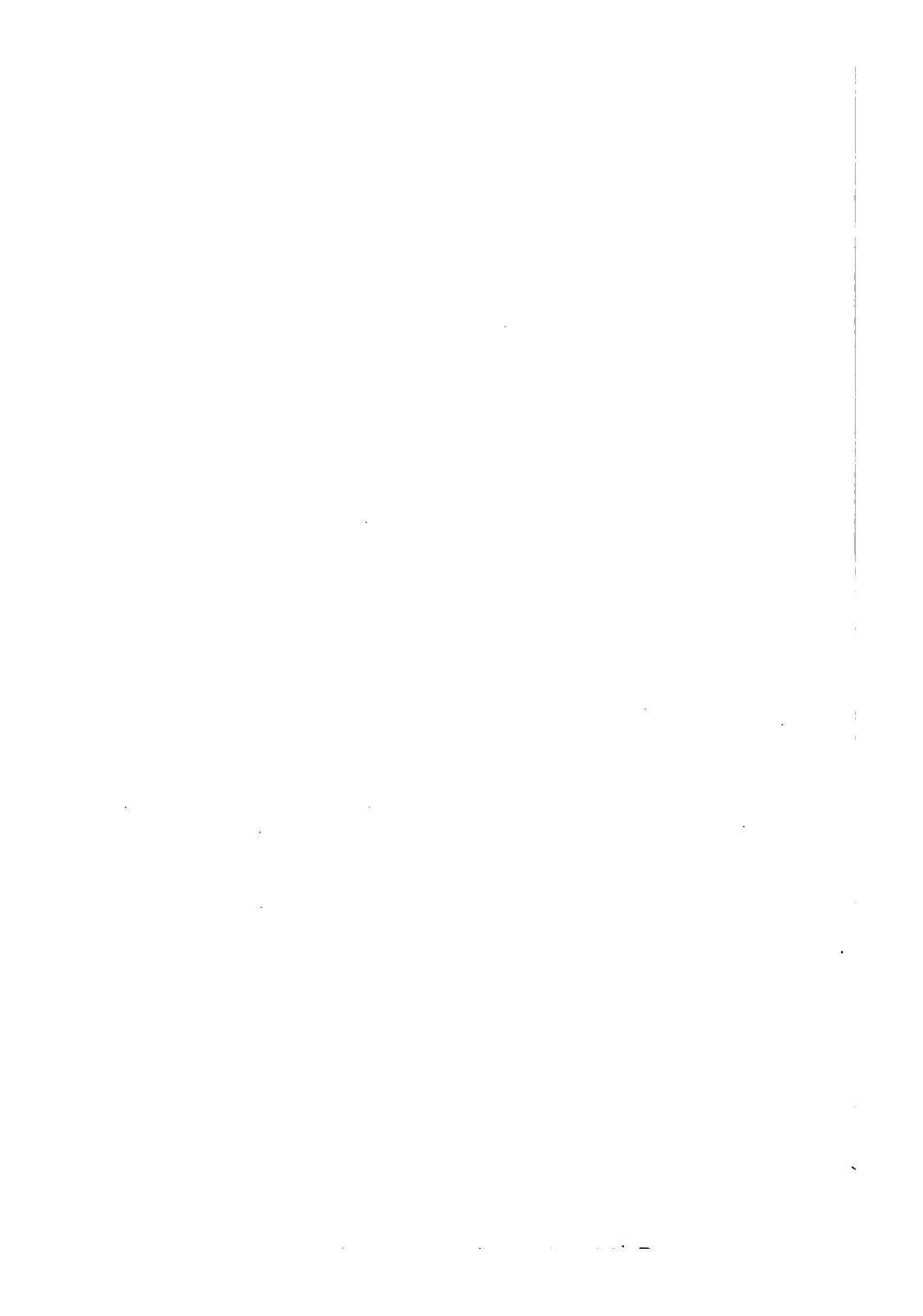
WALTER PRICHARD EATON

Poetry



Eaton

NB:



## **ECHOES AND REALITIES**

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**BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR**

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**THE IDYL OF TWIN FIRES**  
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**THE AMERICAN STAGE OF TO-DAY**  
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**BOY SCOUTS IN GLACIER PARK**  
**THE RUNAWAY PLACE (WITH ELSE UNDERHILL)**  
**THE MAN WHO FOUND CHRISTMAS**

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# ECHOES AND REALITIES

BY  
WALTER PRICHARD EATON



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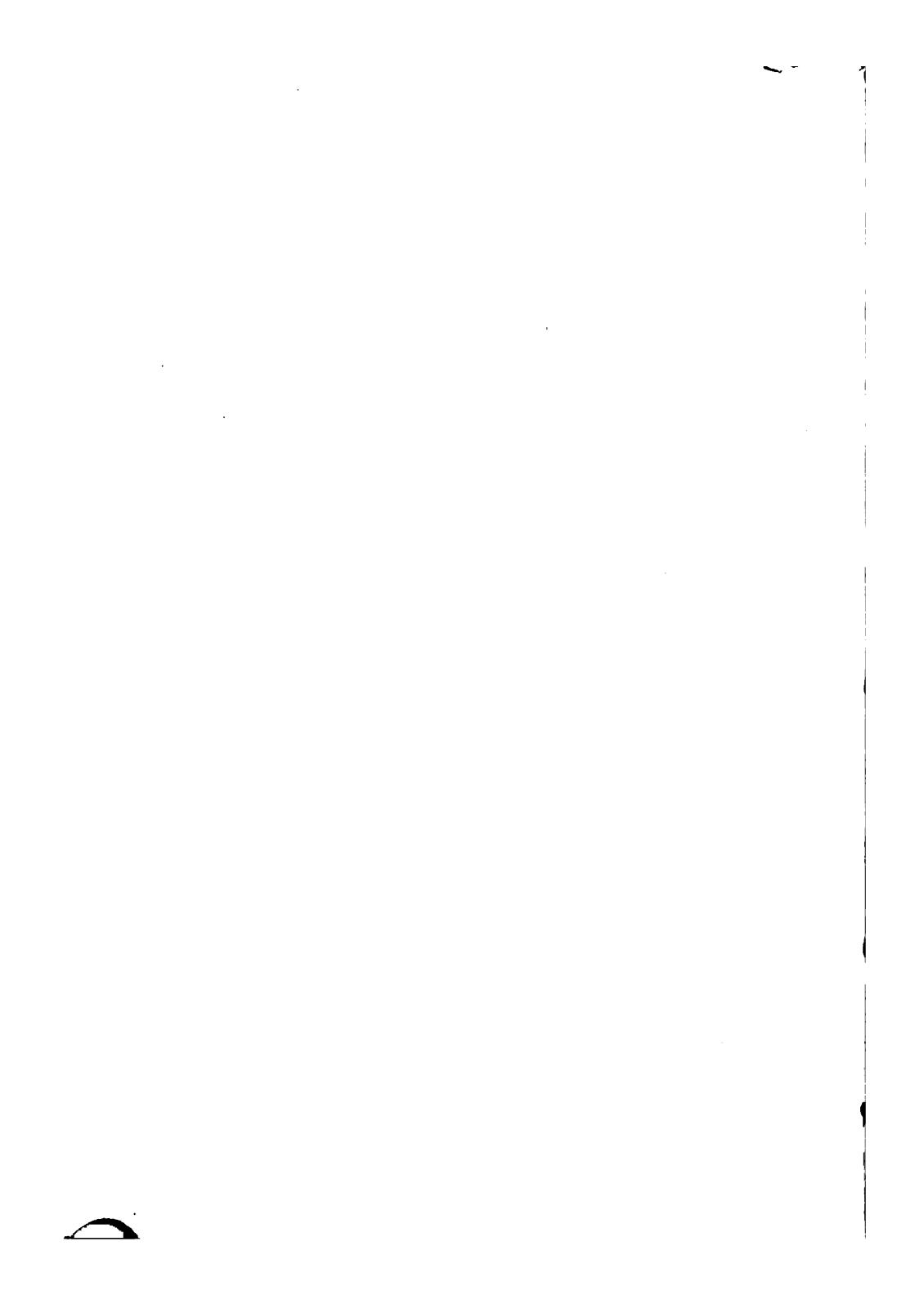
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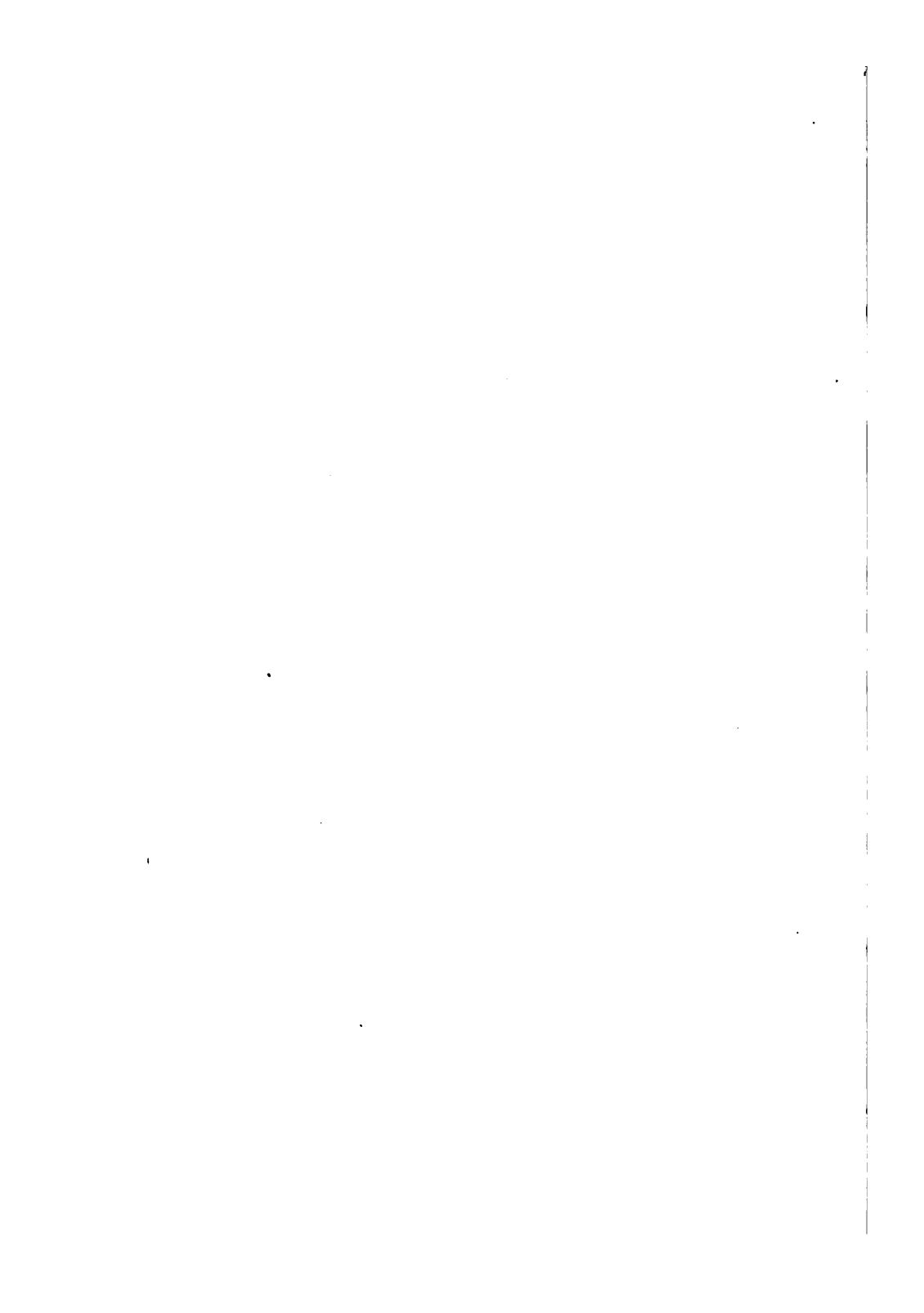
**CAPTAIN FRANKLIN P. ADAMS**

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To the editors of *The Atlantic Monthly*,  
*The Century*, *The American*, *Everybody's*  
and *Pearson's* magazines, *The New York*  
*Call*, and especially to the editor of  
*The New York Tribune*, the author makes  
grateful acknowledgment of permission  
to reprint certain of these poems.



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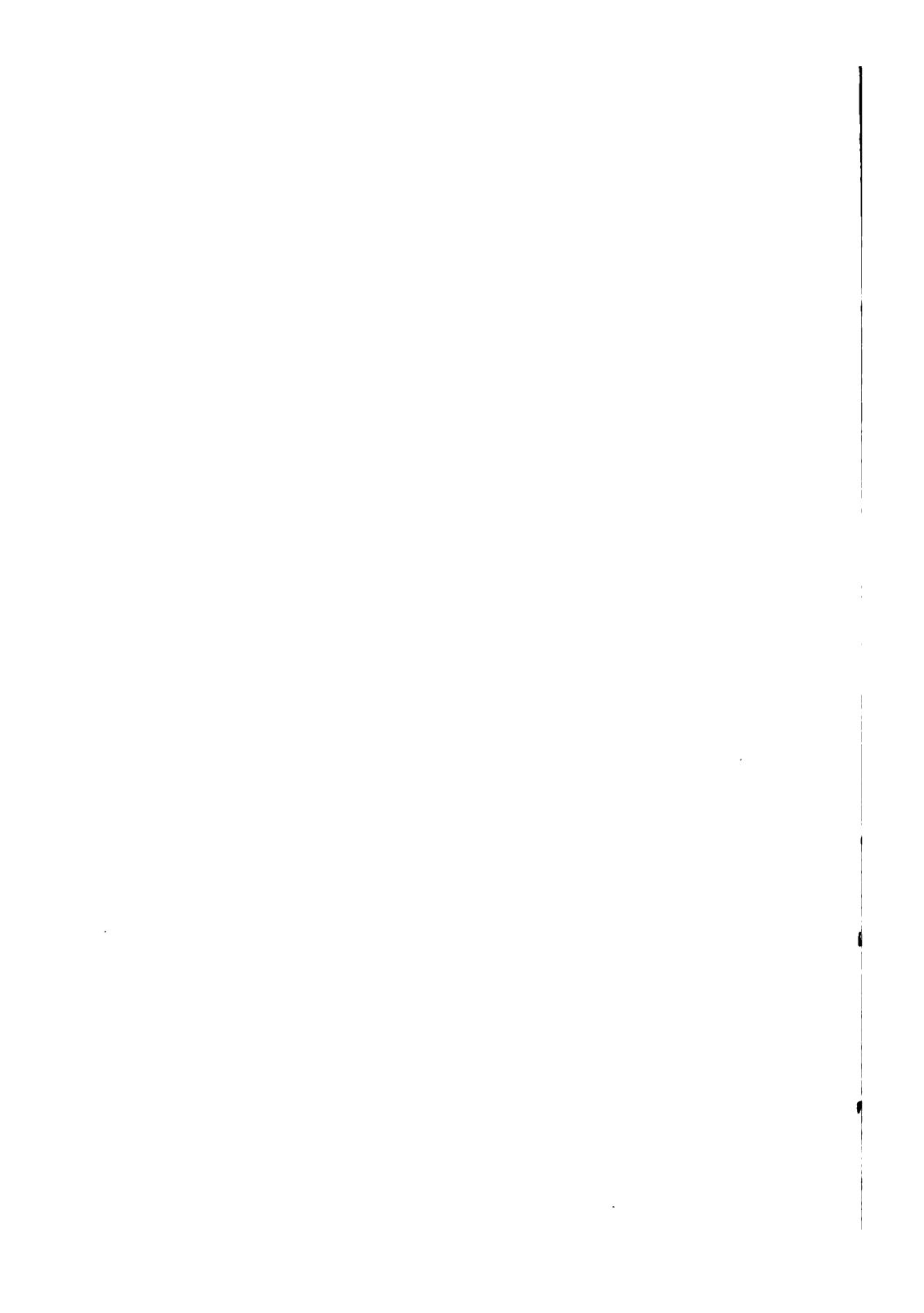
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## **ECHOES AND REALITIES**



## ECHOES AND REALITIES

**To The German People—**

*On the Reinvasion of Russia*

Washington's Birthday, 1918

THIS, O German men, is your great crime—  
Not that you shot cathedrals to the earth,  
But that you strangled Freedom at its birth;  
Not that you followed, blind, your king's command,  
To make of Belgium a desert land  
That he might gain a moment's time  
And thus advance  
To strike the heart of France,  
Who stood with sabre in her hand  
And raised the ancient, thrilling battle-cry  
Which lifts men up and makes them gladly die,  
And who, across her borders, hurled, "Revenge!"  
But that, not blind at all,  
You saw the Russian tyrant fall,

TO THE GERMAN PEOPLE—(*Continued*)

You knew full well the import and the end,  
You knew your Russian brothers were no more  
A foe to you, nor coveted  
One inch of your dear land to rend,  
You knew that they were sick of war,  
You knew the slave-blood they had shed,  
You saw outstretched their comrade hand—  
And yet you brooked the old command,  
The “Forward, march!” not asking where or why,  
And trampled non-resisting men.  
Their fate to die,  
But yours to see your homes again,  
To live in shame,  
Who could not even play the game,  
Who dared not, with a world to win,  
Break through the chains of discipline,  
And with a cry  
Bringing a clean dawn to the sky,  
To shout across the border lands,  
“Comrades, workers of the world,  
For you our battle flags are furled;  
Take up our hopes, and clasp our hands,  
And bring your freedom to its birth—  
We, too, are slaves and know its worth!”  
Ah, no, instead you ground your German heel  
Upon fair Freedom’s face, and you shall feel  
For this the sting of all the scorn

TO THE GERMAN PEOPLE—(*Continued*)

Of ages yet unborn;  
Not scorn for men who are afraid to die,  
For you have met the hail of battle strife,  
But scorn for those who let their fate go by,  
Red scorn for men who are afraid of life!

May 30, 1917

ACROSS the fields a grieving bugle blew  
From out the village graveyard flecked with sun  
And bright with flags and little children's gowns.  
The children ringed the battle monument,  
And presently across the fields so sweet  
With May their May-time voices piped a song.  
To them the four old blue-clad men who stood  
Within the ring were—four old men; those  
hats

A bit uncouth, the magic "G. A. R."  
Evoking not the long Miltonic roll  
The letters by their implication spell,  
Nor visions of that final great parade  
Down Pennsylvania Avenue.

My hoe  
Dropped from my hand as boyhood memories  
woke . . .

The smell of lilacs first, a heavy scent,  
Of lilacs fresh with rain or drenched with dew,  
Borne in great clusters to the monument  
Before the sun was fairly up; and then  
The shrill staccato of the fife and drum,

MAY 30, 1917—(*Continued*)

The "Vet'rans" marching from their Post with  
flags

Of silk most honourably torn, and guns  
That had, we knew, shot many a Rebel down.  
They marched erect, our fathers and their friends,  
The milkman by the carpenter, yet now,  
This day, removed a world apart from us  
And hallowed by their deeds. Their women  
folk

In plodding file came on behind, each one  
With flowers in a basket for some grave.  
Then we, the children, fell in step at last,  
Or tried to keep in step, and after prayer  
Beside the monument (the prayers were long  
And you could hear the rustle of the wind,  
The clinking of the Captain's sword, the scrape  
Of feet down on the gravel drive, and scores  
Of other sounds, each growing more distinct,  
Before the Chaplain came to his "Amen"),  
We sang, "How Sleep the Brave," the band  
struck up

A dirge, the files moved off by many paths  
To decorate the graves, and then a squad  
Mounted the highest knoll for the salute.  
The little girls jammed fingers in their ears,  
We boys rejoiced to hear the sharp commands  
And scrambled for the empty shells. "My dad

MAY 30, 1917—(*Continued*)

Was in the squad!" was some boy's proudest boast.

We went at length back to the meeting house  
And heard brave deeds rehearsed again, and saw  
The pulpit draped with flags. When all was  
done

We wandered home, our young hearts stirred, the  
thoughts

Of battles and of glory crowding us. . . .

Across the fields so sweet with May a dirge  
Came drifting, and the spell was gone. Not for  
The ancient dead the trombone's plaintive blare,  
The muffled drum beat like a heart in pain,  
But for the young, the strong, about to die!

I hate a pulpit now dressed up for war

In blasphemy of bunting; all my past

Seems sometimes wiped from out my consciousness

Till I stand alien to my kith and kin,  
And while their banners wave anew, to me  
An ancient, useless horror seems once more  
To grasp a helpless world, too weak for Love.

My heart ached as I took my hoe again,  
Alone between the threads of sprouting seed,  
And went about my toil. A red-start hopped  
Close by, with funny up-flicks of his tail,  
To catch the insects that my hoe disturbed.

MAY 30, 1917—(*Continued*)

I thought the warblers never were so tame  
As this sad spring, and paused to watch my  
friend,  
While from the graveyard moved the village  
throng  
Out toward the pulpit draped with flags of war,  
And o'er the fields so sweet with May there  
throbbed  
Those aching drum-taps for the living dead.

**Bridgeport, Feb. 3, 1917**

I WAS in Bridgeport, February three,  
Walking along the business thoroughfare  
In search of any shop where I could buy  
A pad of paper on which to inscribe  
A poem about the pheasants and the cold.  
New clothes, new rugs, new rings, new cars—a  
swarm  
Of glossy Fords were darting through the street—  
Could be procured, but war prosperity  
Had not yet caused a wide demand for pads  
To pen immortal verse upon. At length  
I saw a hopeful sign, and made to cross  
The way, when in a window by my side  
A man appeared and hung a bulletin:—  
**VON BERNSTORFF GETS HIS PASSPORTS,**  
read the black  
And startling print, amid a window full  
Of pink and foolish waxen mannikins  
Unclad in lacy underwear and hose.  
I felt a dull knock in my chest; “It’s come,”  
I thought, “this Monster that we all abhor!”  
I did not heed the silly, silken legs

BRIDGEPORT, FEB. 3, 1917—(*Continued*)

That flanked the staring print; I only saw  
The grey ships steaming for the open sea,  
The thunder cloud of horror rolling up.

A little crowd had gathered at my back,  
Reading aloud the brief and startling words.  
Some laughed; two women passed the bulletin  
To comment on the lingerie; an oath  
Or two damned Germany:—then down the street  
The clangour sounded of a ladder truck,  
And close behind the engine belching sparks;  
“A fire!” rose the cry, and quite alone  
I stood before the black, momentous print.  
A trifling blaze around the block, and they  
Forgot the conflagration of the world!

Oh, little Man, in little space confined,  
How smaller than thy destiny thou art,  
Serene, complacent, in a petty round,  
Unconscious shoved upon Inferno’s brink,  
Because across the seas are other men,  
Thy brothers, who have been complacent, too!  
How long, O Lord, are we to stay so small,  
Accepting destiny from Kings’ red hands,  
Behind the Trader seeing not the scorn?

## Preparedness

A DOZEN of us talked preparedness  
Around the stove, and got nowhere, of course.  
Tom Noble, coming in for Blackstones, though,  
Would not join with us in our talking match—  
He said the subject got him “all het up.”  
But still, he added, glaring hard around,  
He wouldn’t stand no German tellin’ him  
What boat is safe for him to cross upon;  
And as he left and slammed the door behind,  
We heard “a nation’s honour” wafted back.  
’Twas pretty generally agreed, I think,  
That we should have an army big enough  
For every purpose of defence, though what  
We were to be defended from not one  
Of us could clearly say; and then, of course,  
We mustn’t spend too much nor boost the cost  
Of living up—it’s high enough, God knows!  
Just look at gasolene!

I left at last,  
Sick with the futile talk and unctuous love  
For images of battle underneath  
The talk, and headed for the mountainside.

PREPAREDNESS—(*Continued*)

'Twas coming on to snow and in the woods  
I heard the little hissing of the flakes  
As they came down on pine and hemlock boughs,  
A gentle, soothing music to my ears.  
A partridge, like a snare drum, boomed away  
Down the white hollow of the frosted brook.  
Aloft, somewhere, two branches, interlocked,  
Uttered that human cry all woodsmen know.  
My snowshoes pattered softly and the drop  
Of tiny snowballs from the wind-stirred trees  
Were elfin exclamations in the woods.  
The winter wilderness held talk with me  
And I forgetful grew, and well content.

Then suddenly I picked up human tracks,  
And curious to see what was afoot  
Followed their lead. Beneath a frosted nave,  
Where Palestrina would be none too pure,  
A shot had rung—the shell lay on the snow—  
And then, with twenty paces up the aisle,  
The man had reached his prey. Upon the snow  
I saw the crimson stain. A life wiped out,  
A pretty, forest-roving rabbit gone,  
Because a man had blood-lust in his heart  
And in his hand a gun!

I saw the snow  
Before the hell-swept trenches of Verdun,  
And it grew red and redder as I watched.

### **Town Meeting**

OUR annual town meeting came to-day  
And all the voters gathered in the hall—  
The males who constitute our little town,  
So much like other little towns up here  
Among the hills, or elsewhere through the  
land.

They tell us we Americans are soft,  
Unnerved and flabby with luxurious life,  
And War's the thing to harden us, of course.  
I looked around the room, and had to smile.  
Down front a Tory sat (we have them still,  
And they are loudest in the cry to arms)  
And he was soft, I must admit, and fat,  
In spite of Plattsburg drill six months ago.  
I counted five, among three hundred strong,  
Who pay, I know, a Federal income tax,  
And all of them were soft—and all for War.  
The rest—the thing's a grizzly joke—the rest  
Have never had a chance at luxury.  
You can't grow soft if you are cutting wood  
All day upon the mountain side, in snow  
Above your knees, or feeding it against

### TOWN MEETING—(*Continued*)

The snarling, singing, hungry saw; my fat  
And warlike Tory friend would be a wreck  
If he pitched cord wood for an hour. You  
can't

Grow soft by milking fourteen cows a day,  
Nor holding true a plough in broken sod,  
Nor filling gravel teams, nor hauling mail  
In storm and shine, in sleet and cold, four times  
Each day against our winter winds, nor yet  
By rising when the world is dark and chill  
To shake the furnace for our Tory friend  
So he may find it warm at breakfast time.  
It's true our workers in the mills are few—  
We haven't many soft with lousy lungs;  
I fancy they need War to harden them  
(It's such a pleasant recreation, too);  
But we have carpenters with dainty hands,  
And station porters stale with wrestling trunks,  
And gardeners who've never dug enough,  
And other workers at the world's slim wage  
Who will be glad to know that luxury  
Has made them soft in vicious idleness!  
They sat there in this crowded hall—against  
The five, the hundreds who by daily toil  
And hard economy make both ends meet  
And once a week take in a picture show.  
If they are soft, the only reason is

**TOWN MEETING—(*Continued*)**

That meat now costs so much they're under-fed—  
But do we need a War to alter that?  
Perhaps we do—but not the sort of War  
Our puffed, portentous Tory has in mind!

## Pittsburgh—1917

WE plunged through mountains naked, black, and  
scarred,  
With soot-stained hovels clinging to their flanks,  
And belching chimneys where a mine shaft  
yawned,  
And came at length into a canyon slit  
Where smoke clouds hovered overhead so dense  
The sun ball was an orange disk, or rolled  
Upon the slow wind down the valley lane  
To soil and poison and defile; great stacks  
Arose and poured their midnight-tinted plumes  
Into the currents of the lazy air;  
The lesser stacks, in ranks like forest trees—  
Denuded trees with not a top or branch—  
Poured lesser plumes of brown and grey and  
white  
And cruel yellow, sinister and foul.  
An open door was like a velvet cave  
Lit with a white-hot glare, and pigmy men  
Seemed but the pumice bits forever churned  
Helpless in some volcano's boiling depths.  
Where two foul rivers with their fairest names

PITTSBURGH—1917—(*Continued*)

Meet to roll onward toward the setting sun,  
The city piled its soot-smutched monuments,  
Its towers, houses and hotels, and sucked  
The smoke and looked most prosperous and  
black.

## Washington Square—1917

Is this the same old Square, kissed fresh by May,  
Where once I used to sit and face the row  
Of red brick houses and the Roman arch,  
Filled with the wine of youth and rosy dreams?  
The little girls are hopping still across  
The same chalked lines and back again; the boys  
Are splashing water from the drinking jet;  
The nurse maids congregate; the under world  
Yields up into the warming sun its dregs—  
God's images who paw the wind-blown sheets  
Of any paper that comes floating by  
(*The Journal* or the *World* preferred); the trees  
Are putting forth the same green haze above;  
And on the walk there loiter past my bench,  
Each to the other leaning amorous,  
The same drab lovers aureoled with Spring:  
Above the traffic's din for undersong,  
I hear the waltz some hurdy-gurdy plays!

No, not the same! The ancient thrill is  
gone;

The memory of faces bobbing past  
And shoulders gleaming in the golden light,

WASHINGTON SQUARE—1917—(*Continued*)

Of fragrant hair that brushed my chin, and warm  
Sweet glances as the music died away;  
Of one whose perfume was provocative,  
And one who shut her eyes and showed her  
throat

'As though she yielded to the violins;—  
It does not come—I call to it in vain  
That once awoke, no matter what the place,  
To wrap me in a rosy revery  
At summons of the hurdy-gurdy's waltz.

A khaki figure paces on the curb  
To guard the Russian consulate; the flags  
Are whipping down the wind; against the sky  
They seem like crimson flowers suddenly.  
How beautiful they are, how full of life,  
How terrible and tragic! And how real!

I wish that waltz would stop. How old I  
am,  
How old the world! Did we once dance, and  
throb,  
And dream our rosy dreams, and did Spring  
come

With petalled fingers to our dusty Square  
And make an opal of the fountain spray?  
That little girl has missed her hop and had  
To put her other foot to earth. She laughs  
And tries again. Her little throat is white.

WASHINGTON SQUARE—1917—(*Continued*)

A few more years . . .

The hurdy-gurdy man  
Has shifted to a ragtime tune, and I  
Can go about my business up Broadway.

## On Reading Certain Newspapers After the Bigelow Outrage

WHAT ugly wound is this my country bares?  
'Tis we, her people, struck her in the back;  
She whose proud boast it is no man shall lack  
For liberty of voice in her affairs,  
She who affirms the bravest him who dares  
To stand against the loud majority,  
And at his truth hurls not the bitter "Lie";  
She who for all the robe of Justice wears—  
'Tis she we struck, and not her enemies;  
They are no foe of hers who will not take  
The easy path of mild complacencies,  
But bear the lash of scorn for conscience' sake;  
It will not aid Democracy's advance  
To make a virtue of intolerance.

### The Daily Paper

I THOUGHT of all the places that I knew  
Where silence dwells, and peace, to choose me  
one  
That I might share it with the warming sun;—  
I saw a meadow streaked with gentian blue  
While all around the silver willows grew;  
I heard the lisp of water on the run  
Down mountain rocks when April has begun;  
I felt against my feet the upland dew:  
There is a park beneath the Great Divide  
Where every chalice cup puts on a crown,  
And only stillness and sweet peace abide;  
I will go there, thought I, and sit me down,  
Nor read of sin and slaughter any more—  
“The paper,” said my wife, “is at the door.”

### The Brook

THE grey columnar beeches old  
Bore up a roof of autumn gold,  
And flowing through their solemn aisle  
The little brook was still awhile;  
But soon I reached the mountain wall  
And found the brook a water-fall:  
It leapt from green and shadowed ledges  
Bedecked with ferns and dripping sedges;  
It brought the coolness of the heights  
To flash and gleam with dancing lights;  
It sent a moist wind to my face  
And chilled with dew the mossy place;  
It tumbled with a gentle roar  
To reach at last the forest floor.  
I listened all that autumn day  
To hear what it might have to say—  
The age-old effort to translate  
The speech of things inanimate.  
I only know its tinkling thunder  
Was all of joy and primal wonder,  
Of dim, forgotten, happy ways  
We wandered ere these latter days;

THE BROOK—(*Continued*)

I only know that when I left  
I walked as one long since bereft,  
And minded after dulling years  
Of his great loss—and close to tears.

### **The Fields of Home**

How soft the evening shadows creep  
Across the fields of home;  
How gently falls the wind asleep,  
The little clouds their places keep  
Beneath the vast sky dome.

hear the far brook murmuring;  
Before he seeks his nest  
I hear a lone bird sweetly sing,  
And catch the sunset on his wing  
Against the golden west.

Dear fields of home, serene and calm,  
In rock and verdure clad,  
Whence for the spirit comes your balm,  
Why do my dumb lips shape a psalm,  
Why is my soul so glad?

The wars of men have shaken me,  
My faith their doubt besets;  
But you are as you used to be,  
The shadows creep from every tree,  
And my hurt soul forgets.

### **The True Tragedy**

Poor frozen garden, lying under snow,  
Will your buds awaken, will your roses blow?  
Will this poor world ever shed the pall of war?  
Shall we love each other as we loved before?

Yes, frozen garden, you will wake again,  
Sprouting cups of tulips in the April rain,  
And when men are weary they will stop the war,  
Loving then each other—as they loved before!

## A White-Throat Sings

FROM ancient Edens long forgot  
    He felt a breath of spring,  
And in the leafless apple tree  
    He heard a white-throat sing.

With fluted triplets, clear and sweet,  
    The bird proclaimed its joy,  
And on the withered orchard grass  
    The man became a boy :

A boy who ran, a boy who dreamed,  
    In April sun and rain;  
Who knew all good was happiness,  
    All evil only pain. . . .

Sing on, O white-throat in the tree,  
    He does not hear you now!  
The years are trampling on his heart  
    And armies o'er his brow.

From ancient Edens long forgot  
    No resurrection comes  
Until the smallest sparrow's song  
    Is louder than the drums!

## January Thaw

THE pines stood dripping in the rain to-day,  
Their needles clinging each to each until  
It seemed the trees were thinner and let through  
More of the grey light than on sunny days;  
Quiet they were, as well, and spoke not once  
Of their great sister, the resurgent sea.  
I watched a draggled squirrel run along  
A slender limb, releasing as he sprang  
A shower of drops like shaken quicksilver.  
The cheerful chickadees were draggled, too,  
Their neat breasts ruffled and their voices still.  
Beyond the pines a pool of water stood  
Upon the iris beds, and dank, dead leaves  
That covered up the foxglove plants were spots  
Of gloom amid the snow; the compost heap  
Was faintly steaming in the humid thaw,  
A black volcano risen through the ice.  
I sloshed through pools and saw the scum cling  
'round  
My rubber boots in thin, grey lines; I went  
Indoors again and tried to read, in vain—  
The words upon the page were meaningless,

JANUARY THAW—(*Continued*)

And worse the words I tried to write myself.

Then, quietly, as such things come to pass,  
A wind arose and shook the pines to speech,  
The mystic language of their sister sea;  
The west broke clear; the pools on lawn and bed  
Were crinkled into gold; a bird sang out  
To bid the day farewell.

I tried my book  
Again, and, lo! the words made melody,  
A poet had shaped them to his bosom's need!

## **Skis**

A PALE new moon hung in the western sky  
Above the banners of retreating Day,  
Almost it seemed a golden aeroplane  
To spy on Night, pursuing from the east.  
The summit elm where I stood sent out  
An endless shadow from the light, so faint  
It was a dimming breath of amethyst  
Across the mirror of the wind-swept snow.  
The world, I thought, had never been so still;  
I heard the tinkle of a blown ice chip,  
The crack of frozen bark within the tree  
As with the night the day's thaw stiffened up,  
The faint, far baying of a village dog;  
But other sound was not, except the wind,  
Viewless and chill, forever rushing by.  
Below my feet the pasture dropped away  
With white-capped boulders strewing it, a long  
Descent to that toy barn and tiny house  
That snuggled warmly by the valley road,  
Behind a hemlock screen. I pulled my cap  
More firmly down about my ears, drew in  
One last deep breath of stinging air, and slipped

SKIS—(*Continued*)

My skis across the rim: then farewell breath,  
And almost vision, too, as tears rolled down  
My cheeks, while past my face the riven air  
Tore by, and all the hillside flew to meet  
My flying figure with a low-hissed song—  
The song of rapid runners cleaving snow!  
A moment only, and the barn appeared  
Looming beside me, that had been a toy.  
A stem with all my strength, a spurt of snow,  
And I was through the gate, where ran the road  
Sedate and level past the valley farms.  
Far up above me on the lonely hill  
My summit elm sentinelled the ridge,  
A toy tree children might take out and stand  
Beside their soldiers on the play-room floor.

## Hills and the Sea

WE rushed down rolling highways from the hills  
Until the low horizon flattened out  
And over yellow marsh grass came a wind,  
Caressing, soft, and smelling of the brine;  
Then up a crest we sped, and saw the sea!  
Blue to the sky-line lay its wrinkled plain  
And from the circle's edge the blue sky climbed,  
Pearl-tinted to the east, with quiet clouds  
Afloat above the white winged ships below.  
Our engine stopped and in the hush we heard  
The sea song of the surges rolling in,  
Surges that come from far adventuring  
To lay their burdens on the yellow sands,  
With ceaseless murmur or reverberate boast.  
How good that sound, how sweet the briny smell!  
How leapt the spirit out to meet the sea!  
And all that night we woke to hear the surf  
Booming its way along the beach, to smell  
The seaweed and the salt, to feel on sheet  
And hair the damp caresses of the fog.  
Next day a red sun burned the mists away  
Till underneath my feet the sands were hot

### HILLS AND THE SEA—(*Continued*)

As I walked barefoot and apart, fleeing  
The other bathers with their merry shouts,  
To let the ocean have its way with me.  
The foam-white combers charging up the beach;  
The booming surf song, and the steady wind  
Which made a tiny shrilling in the grass  
That marks in clumps the winter tides' advance;  
The steel-bright pathway toward the sun; the  
warmth  
Of sun and sea wind on my naked skin;  
The far horizon's luring line; the smell  
Of seaweed and the sting of spray—all these  
My senses caught in half unconsciousness,  
While deep within a great emotion came  
To swim far out upon that heaving plain  
And be forever part of its great bulk,  
Its vastness, power and eternity.  
“The sea!” I breathed, and childhood memories  
    woke,  
The memory of wonder and of dreams,  
And youthful visions, too, when magic worlds  
Lay down below the sky-line, and the heart  
Was hot with longing for the siren quest.  
“The sea!” I cried again, and plunged headfirst  
Into a comber's curling green embrace.  
Another day;—we sped twixt rolling farms,  
Or through drab towns where men toiled dustily,

## HILLS AND THE SEA—(*Continued*)

Back toward the hills, and saw at length supine  
Against the west our smoke-blue mountain wall.  
Again our engine stopped, and in the pause  
The silver trumpet of a hermit thrush  
Made elfin welcome from the hemlock depths  
That fell away below, into a vale  
Where wound our road up toward the hills of  
home.

How vast the smoke-blue rampart lay beneath  
A sky where sunset clouds were gathering;  
How sweet its curve, like some fair woman's  
breast;

How in its swelling roll and mighty dip  
Eternity was pictured by a line!  
God's chamber beams are laid upon the deep,  
Yet lift we up our eyes unto the hills  
And, lo! again the vastness and the dream.  
Beyond our rampart, salmon tinted now,  
Lay the bright mansions of the heart's desire!

Our engine coughed to life, we slid ahead,  
Down through the hemlocks in the mountain chill,  
And raced the twilight, marching from the east,  
Back to a house beneath the mountain wall.

## The Abandoned Farm'

No other ruin of the homes of men  
Is quite like this abandoned farm beneath  
The mountain wall, its mouse-grey shingles  
    curled,  
Its mouse-grey boarding worn with storm and  
    sun  
To fury hollows picking out the grain,  
Its windows gone, its roof-tree sagged awry,  
A bitter-sweet around the chimney twined,  
Pink fire weed and fragrant raspberries  
Tangling the square where once the barn arose.  
The orchard trees are wild with water spouts,  
The flaming painter's brush and Queen Anne's  
    lace  
Run riot where the mowing stood; each field  
Once hewn with bitter, patient toil, and held  
Against the inroads of the forest hosts,  
Defenceless now is giving up the fight,  
Yielding each year a little more clean land  
Back to the slow devouring wilderness.  
The Old World ruins were the prey of age,  
Or war, perchance, or changing rule that hurled

THE ABANDONED FARM—(*Continued*)

One people downward as another climbed;  
Close by, around them, life goes on; but here  
Life has receded like a falling tide,  
Leaving this record of the pioneer  
Who reached the utmost height, as on the beach  
Some living thing is left, to fight and die,  
And mark at last the tide's insurgent bound  
By its grey shell sea worn and touched with pearl.

The mountain ever broods above, the clouds  
Across its flank their shadow anchors trail;  
The winter drifts pile high; the shy deer browse,  
Or paw for apples underneath those trees  
Set out by hands that Death long since has  
clasped.

Dust unto dust, and plank to tree returns!  
But I beneath the mighty mountain's bulk  
Look from the ruin to the sheer grey rocks,  
Not pitiful of Man so much as glad  
That Nature still her power holds, and still  
Must we fight on and breed up pioneers.

### **In a Summer House**

THE climbing roses are a burst of pink  
Over the trellised arch that makes a gate  
Out of my garden to the little spot  
That I have cleared behind the sumach hedge,  
About a rough-made summer house entwined  
With creeper like a ruin; on the pool  
A water lily floats—the first this year—  
And yields its heavy fragrance to the sun;  
The Canterbury bells are faintly stirred,  
The larkspur spires drowse in loveliness;  
And I must pause to look before I pass  
Under the arch and settle to my toil.

Alas! the interruptions of mankind  
Are nothing to the soft insistencies  
Of life about my summer house. A world  
Of little things, of bumblebees and birds,  
Of bugs and vagrant flower scents, of clouds  
Fantastic on a summer sky and songs  
That whisper in the grass—this world is mine  
Behind the sumach hedge, and being mine  
Assumes a quaint priority, try as  
I will to keep my mind chained down to work.

## IN A SUMMER HOUSE—(*Continued*)

Two wrens have nested in a box half hid  
Beneath the vines that canopy my seat.  
The father calls and mother wren darts out  
Her pretty head, looks right and left, then leaves  
The nest while he comes in with provender.  
I note that he can sing with bill tight closed,  
Calling his mate yet keeping fast his bug.  
Out in the grass a chipping sparrow hops  
Seeking a dandelion gone to seed;  
He settles to the task, and one by one  
Strips all the seeds down to the naked crown,  
A brave protector of the lawn! The bees  
Are busy in a flower cup, their hum  
Singing around me with a rhythmic pulse:  
A goldfinch swoops into the cosmos plants  
To sway there like a Japanese design:  
Along the boarding at my feet two ants  
Are tugging home a caterpillar skin:  
Across the rye behind my house a wind  
Goes wandering, and suddenly I see  
The green sea surges marching on the shore  
And hear their long drawn thunder in the trees—  
The far off echo of a memory.  
Beyond the rye, beyond the brook, a hill  
Domes up, and over it the west wind piles  
The high Himalayas of the cumuli,  
Mount Everests of shadowed white against

IN A SUMMER HOUSE—(*Continued*)

The summer sky's serenity. I watch  
Their summits shift and roll, day dreaming still  
Like any boy, of heights cerulean.  
The bees hum on, a hundred tiny sounds  
Proclaim a universe below the grass;  
Naught but the cries of children far away,  
So sweet and shrill as only playtime breeds,  
Disturb me with the thoughts of human folk.

Still on my table blankly stares the pad  
I came here to blot black with inky words,  
While in their nest the little wrens complain,  
And languid summer flows in fragrant tide  
Across the green Sargasso of the grain.

### **The Pine Grosbeaks**

A SILVER hush was in the woods to-day,  
Where frozen rain had gemmed each pendent  
branch.

And laid transparent lacquer on the snow.  
In open glades the low sun smote my eyes  
As on a glassy sea, and under foot  
The constant squeak and crackle of my heels  
Was strangely loud amid the silences.  
The hoof print of a deer, a shredded cone  
Left from a squirrel's meal, a pheasant's bed  
Beneath a hardhack bush, a rabbit road  
Packed hard before the rain came—these alone  
Were signs of life; and no sound but my heels.  
Then, suddenly, high in an evergreen  
Above a pasture edge I heard the soft,  
Sweet, whispering twitter of a flock of birds,  
And saw their rosy bosoms catch the light—  
The shy pine grosbeaks, strangers from the  
North!

They did not sing, but talked among themselves  
And kept seclusion in this friendly pine,  
Not even scolding me, as if, perchance,

THE PINE GROSBEAKS—(*Continued*)

They knew not man but thought me some odd  
deer

Or other woodland wanderer. The sun  
Was lower now, and in the west a glow  
Of gold and salmon gleamed between the trees,  
And purple shadows crept along the snow.

I thought how but the day before, in town,  
A friend had pitied me, amazed because  
I dwelt outside the whirlpool of New York,  
And had not seen the latest play, nor heard  
Some magic concert in a scented hall.

“What *do* you find to do up there?” he said.

I watched the sunset daggers through the  
pines,

I heard the soft, sweet cheeping of the birds,  
The alien grosbeaks from their frozen North,  
I let the sting of Winter fill my lungs;  
And then I laughed aloud. A scale of ice  
Came rattling down and tinkled on the crust;  
The grosbeaks fluttered in the dusking tree,  
Then settled back to roost again.

Once more  
A hush of rose and silver wrapped the world.

## The Little Hills

THE light was laughing on the little hills  
When he crawled forth from out the city's press,  
Nerve-racked and ill and full of gloomy thoughts,  
And on the door step of an ancient house,  
Worn smooth by vanished feet, sat down and  
    heard  
Familiar voices calling in the fields.

Surely the stillness of the noon was good!  
Those voices were as music on the air,  
Fraught with remembrance of forgotten things;  
Or like the sudden gurgle of the brook  
That leaped a rock and ran on silently  
Where spruces arched its mossy bed and cool  
Green ferns bent down to hide a trout. Far off  
And faint a cow bell tinkled drowsily;  
Across the pasture slope the summer clouds  
Their shadow anchors trailed, and drew more  
    near,  
And swept a purple gloom across his feet;  
The sleepy hum of insects half unheard  
Sang like the strings of some far orchestra;

### THE LITTLE HILLS—(*Continued*)

And through the open door he caught the stir  
Of household life, the crooning sounds of home.

Slowly his tired eyelids drooped; the swarm  
Of buzzing thoughts that plagued unceasingly  
Drew off, and left his mind a soothing blank:  
And all the voices of the summer day  
Gathered into a song articulate:—

*Poor pilgrim of the ways of man that end  
In sorrow soon,*

*Canst thou not see the blue sky bend  
Behind the little hills?*

*Come, in the nectar of the brimming noon  
Drown all your ills!*

*The human heart that hungered once for fame  
Hungers at last  
For comfort of the humble name  
Breathed o'er its infancy—  
The vain pursuit and empty struggle past,  
The true things be.*

*You trailed the wraith of knowledge high and low,  
And fought for wealth;  
But your own self you did not know,  
And poor you are and weak:  
There are no riches like the body's health,  
And souls must speak.*

### THE LITTLE HILLS—(*Continued*)

*Not in the ways of man the Voice is heard,  
Not in the fight;  
But in the silence: as a bird  
Wakened from its first sleep  
Makes lonely music in the summer night  
And star light deep.*

*The little hills are calling you away,  
The air is sweet,  
And silent is the long, sweet day:  
Awake, O dreaming heart,  
Grown cold and barren in the stifling street,  
Know what thou art!*

Then slumber came, the slumber of a child.  
And when he woke and saw the sun's decline,  
Wistful, he sought his mother out and kissed  
Her on the cheek and bade her make the bed  
In his old room beneath the eaves. And she,  
Not understanding him, her youngest child,  
Who from the hearth had gone away so soon  
To live his life apart, in different wise,  
With friends and fancies far above her ken,  
Smiled suddenly a happy smile and ran,  
As one who sees at last her mission clear,  
To bring the linen from the cedar chest.

## To One Defending New York

YOUR voice was loudest in the counter plea,  
That urged us, Atlas-like, to bear our load  
And cease our whining, since the choice was  
ours;

Yours was the chide: "Du hast es ja gewollt!"  
—The poet's pity but the poet's scorn.

Perhaps I thought your chide unjust; perhaps  
The word was on my tongue of hot reply;  
I know not, for a sudden vision came,  
And all your speech, the rumblings of the town  
You would defend, the hated streets, the heat  
'And dirt and turmoil were as not. Your face  
Alone remained out of the misty dream  
That had a moment gone been what we were—  
Six men and women on a dusty stoop,  
Worn thin with heat and toil and poisoned  
air.

And on that face no frown of contest sat,  
And from your lips no word of chiding came.  
For we two were alone amid the hills  
Where all our little speeches are as froth  
Upon the ocean of God's stillness visible.

TO ONE DEFENDING NEW YORK—(*Continued*)

And while I wondered why words ever were  
And watched the hours passing in your eyes,  
Your lips were parted without sound to greet  
The silence and the sky space and the stars!

## Glacier Park Vignettes

### Iceberg Lake

A SEMI-CIRCLE of gigantic rock  
Around the mirror of a cold green lake—  
Three thousand feet precipitous and grim:  
A meadow sown with grass and stars of gold,  
With drifts of snow and blue forget-me-nots:  
And far aloft a goat that clammers down,  
A white speck crawling on immensity.

### Heaven's Peak

A HOLE of shadow deep below  
Into the forest-darkened gulf,  
Then rising up,  
Snow capped, pyramidal,  
Proud like the Matterhorn,  
The mighty mountain  
Jewelled with the sun.

### Timber Line

THE tortured trees of timber line,  
So small, so old,  
So twisted by the wind,  
So bent and wracked and beaten to the ground,  
Yet so alive and fighting to the end,  
Are like those prophets of the world's advance,  
Who face the storm sleet  
Of the scorn of men,  
Grow old and hard  
And bare with buffets on the breast,  
To die at last  
High on the uplands with their dream!



GLACIER PARK VIGNETTES—(*Continued*)

**Rising Wolf**

HERE where the swift green river has its source  
In three sweet lakes,  
Old Rising Wolf stands up,  
Four-square and strong,  
To sentinel the range—  
A grave, benignant dome of brown and red:  
Pathless his shaggy sides,  
And no man climbs  
To view from that outstanding height  
The ghost drives of the buffalo.

GLACIER PARK VIGNETTES—(*Continued*)

**Lake Ellen Wilson**

AN oval mile of emerald  
Set in a cirque of vast, fantastic rocks;  
Above, the snow fields climbing to the sky,  
Below, far off, the blue, mysterious plains;  
A little wind has made the water crawl;  
A little cloud, a white balloon  
That trails its anchor down the slope,  
Has swept that shadow out across the lake,  
And, lo!  
The emerald is an amethyst.

**Piegan Pines**

I SHALL be one with these pines  
Some happy day!  
Dwarfed by the wind and moulded by the snow,  
They burst pink cones  
In a meadow starred with violets.  
No sound they hear  
But the mountain wind,  
The bird-like chirp of the ground squirrels,  
The tinkle of ice water brooks  
Across the grass,  
The far, soft thunder of out-leaping streams  
That glide like silver hair down dripping  
cliffs  
From glaciers on the Great Divide—  
The hair of Mélisande grown white with peace.  
All night I lay beneath the stars  
And heard the breeze-borne thunder;  
I saw the sun  
Blush on the glaciers while the world was dark,  
Then pry the gloom out of the hole beneath;  
I saw the golden violets  
Nod in the rising breeze;

GLACIER PARK VIGNETTES—(*Continued*)

I drank from brooks of melting snow,  
And said good morning to a deer.  
I shall be one with these pines  
Some happy day!

## A Little Boy's Poems About Trees

### The Pines

I THINK I like the pines the best,  
'Cause when the sun is in the west  
And all the other trees are still,  
'Cept, p'raps, the poplars on the hill,  
And Sue is being dressed for tea  
And no one's left to play with me,  
The pines still have a tale to tell,  
Just like the murmur in a shell;  
I love to hark and hear them sigh;  
And yet I'm sad—I wonder why?

### The Poplars

THE slender poplars always grow  
In a long and solemn row,  
Marching gravely by the wall  
Like a leafy funeral.  
I guess you would never think  
That I've seen the poplars wink!

A LITTLE BOY'S POEMS ABOUT TREES—  
(Continued)

**The Chestnut**

THE chestnut is a bully tree,  
I mean both kinds, of course,  
The kind that bears the nuts you eat  
And the kind they call the horse.

Horse chestnuts grow right on the street,  
And when the blooms are out,  
They look just like great Christmas trees  
With candles all about.

The other kind is better, though,  
'Cause when the Fall comes 'round  
A million prickly balls drop down  
And burst upon the ground.

And shining in the prickly balls  
Are nuts with little tails,  
And me and Susan pick them out  
And take them home in pails.

And then Ma gets a great big pan,  
And fills the stove with wood,  
And then we roast them till they pop,  
And, gee! but they are good!

A LITTLE BOY'S POEMS ABOUT TREES—  
*(Continued)*

**The Birches**

THE little birches, white and slim,  
Gleaming in the forest dim,  
Must think the day is almost gone,  
For each one has her nightie on!

**The Larches**

THE larches are the lady pines—  
You'd know it by their hair,  
And by their prim and dainty ways  
And by the gowns they wear.

Their gowns are green, their hair is fine  
And fluffy in the breeze;  
And, just like girls, they huddle up  
Apart from other trees.

A LITTLE BOY'S POEMS ABOUT TREES—  
*(Continued)*

**The Willows**

By the little river,  
Still and deep and brown,  
Grow the graceful willows,  
Gently dipping down;

Dipping down and brushing  
Everything that floats—  
Leaves and logs and fishes,  
And the passing boats.

Were they water maidens  
In the long ago,  
That they lean out sadly  
Looking down below?

In the misty twilight  
You can see their hair,  
Weeping water maidens  
That were once so fair.

A LITTLE BOY'S POEMS ABOUT TREES—  
*(Continued)*

**“Cherry Ripe”**

ROBINS in the cherry tree,  
Come on and get a pail!

From white to green,  
From green to red,  
The cherries ripen over head,  
Until a luscious feast is spread  
For all who dare to climb;  
And every hungry bird has seen  
That it is dinner time.

Robins in the cherry tree,  
Who'll help to fill the pail?

A LITTLE BOY'S POEMS ABOUT TREES—  
(Continued)

**A Sap Song**

WHEN the maple sap is running  
    In the Spring,  
And the brooks have burst their fetters  
    Till they sing;  
When the snow is melting fast  
    In the woods,  
And the winter-wrapped old mountains  
    Doff their hoods;  
Then it's pail and spout and kettle,  
    Tap and climb,  
All up the slopes of Toby—  
    Sugar time!

**Elms**

THE college elms for a mile  
Are like a great cathedral aisle;  
But out along the river bend  
They're feather dusters stuck on end.

A LITTLE BOY'S POEMS ABOUT TREES—  
*(Continued.)*

**The Cedars**

THE cedars grow upon the rock,  
Where other trees would die,  
And lift their aged branches up  
Against the mountain sky.

I guess they're old men who've been there  
Since first the mountains were,  
And they are small and tough and cold,  
And always dressed in fir.

**The Spruce**

THE spruce is big and dark and strong,  
And much esteemed by some;  
They like it for its wood, but I  
Because it gives me gum.

A LITTLE BOY'S POEMS ABOUT TREES—  
(Continued)

**The Apple**

THE apple always was to me  
The very oldest kind of tree,  
Because its limbs are bent and low,  
And it never seems to grow.  
You see the orchard in the Fall  
Climbing by the grey stone wall,  
While the cart bumps down the hill  
Rattling to the cider mill,  
And the apple pickers shout,  
And the barrels stand about;  
But the crooked orchard trees  
Never rustle to the breeze,  
Never dance with morning light  
Or sigh and whisper in the night:  
Only when the shadows creep  
Purple down the hill-side steep  
And the sinking sun grows pale,  
In the orchard hangs a veil,  
And for just a moment then  
The crooked trees are young again.

### ***When Kreisler Plays***

'A GRAVE, tall, quiet man with chiselled face,  
Who tucks a plum-red box beneath his chin,  
Nods slightly to the leader of the band,  
And, looking far beyond the misty rows  
Of faces, shoulders, gleaming shirts, awaits  
The moment when the music summons him.  
Woodwind and 'cello die to whispered sound,  
His firm hand sweeps the bow across the strings—  
And angels sing in their serenity!  
It is the quiet end of afternoon  
On upland slopes, when sunset green-and-gold  
Dips sweetly down behind the western range,  
And from the east the Night walks up the sky;  
It is the hole of blue between grey clouds  
That part at last, a finite wrack burst wide  
To show the Infinite; it is the call  
Of all things perfect on this bungled globe,  
And, like things perfect, grave and pure and sad.  
The last note dies away in thin-spun tone,  
And with a ghost-smile on his chiselled face  
He waits the upflare of the orchestra.  
Once more his firm bow leaps, and showered notes

WHEN KREISLER PLAYS—(*Continued*)

Of bird song and June melody drop forth,  
Always to sink at length, as rapture sinks,  
Into the grave perfection of the hour  
When day is done and stillness folds the world.  
The great house scarcely breathed until the end,  
And then a mighty sigh arose before  
Six thousand hands were smote in glad acclaim.  
Descending, dazed, back into common day,  
I heard a woman in the seat behind  
Exclaim, “Do you suppose, my dear, that we  
Can get that record for our phonograph?”

### The Corner Cupboard

You know those corner cupboards which once  
stood  
In ancient dining rooms, built in, with doors  
That arched into a fanlight at the top,  
With hand-wrought HL hinges, and inside  
A scallop shell that domed above the shelves;  
Made by the carpenter who built the house,  
They were a flower of old-time craftsmanship.  
Just such a one we wanted for our house  
To match the hinges we had gathered in,  
The hand-forged door pulls and the braided rugs;  
To keep the ancient flavour of our home  
And speak to us across the years of men  
Whose hearts co-laboured with their hands and  
wrought  
In humblest things the fairest shapes.

At last,  
Close to the road beneath a mountain wall,  
And flanked by yawning barns and storm-wrecked  
trees,  
We chanced upon a grey, abandoned house,  
The winter packing left to rot the sills,  
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### THE CORNER CUPBOARD—(*Continued*)

The roof awry, the windows battered in,  
The whole a ruin that a few more storms,  
A few more winter frosts, would sag and heave  
Into the cellar for a compost heap.

We tried the rusty latch, the door creaked wide,  
And stepping over fallen plaster, damp  
With rain, across the rotting floors, we found,  
Intact, the corner cupboard of our dreams,  
From fluted columns casing in the doors  
To hand-carved scallop shell! We rushed out-  
side,

Intent to learn who owned the ruined house  
And rescue from its sure oblivion  
This treasure of the eighteenth century.

A man and boy were in the field behind,  
Digging potatoes by the pine wood edge.  
(It often happens that the fields are worked  
Around these crumbling dwellings in our land.)

“He owns it,” said the boy, jerking his head  
Toward the old man who laboured at his side.  
“He lives just down the road a piece—his folks  
Are dead; you’ll have ter speak a little loud,  
He’s deef.”

The old man raised his pale blue eyes  
And let them wander past us to the house.  
“It’s stood right thar,” he said, “in that same  
spot,

THE CORNER CUPBOARD—(*Continued*)

Since seventeen-seventy-four; I guess  
It ain't fer sale. Some other folks hev tried  
Ter buy it, too."

"But it will be a wreck,"  
We cried, "before three winters more! The roof  
Above already has begun to go;

You know what dampness does to spoil a house."

"No, I won't sell," the old man said again.  
"Some day I'm goin' ter fix the old place up."  
He gestured toward the stand of pines close by,  
With thin and shaking arm. "Thar's wood  
enough

Ter build a dozen houses, and the barns.  
Yes, some day soon I'll fix it up. No, no—  
It ain't fer sale."

We left him then, once more  
Bent double and with aged fingers crooked  
Clawing potatoes toward an old brown sack.

"Stubborn, I call it," said my wife. "Repairs!  
This house could never be repaired, it's gone  
Past hope, and it will fall before he dies  
And smash that cupboard in the wreck. I'd like  
To come some night and cart it off! A thief?  
It wouldn't seem like theft at all; we'd be  
Doing a service to the cause of art."

"And to our own domestic scheme," said I.  
"But, after all, the old man owns the place

THE CORNER CUPBOARD—(*Continued*)

And in its rotting chambers live his dreams.  
He's going to fix it up some day. 'Some day!'—  
We never lose that vision till we die."

My wife pulled gently shut the door, nor dared  
To look again at that old corner piece.  
"Poor man!" I heard her say. "Poor house, the  
home  
Of squirrels now—and ghosts!"

We drove away  
With but a backward glance that showed the  
house

A grey old ruin framed in autumn gold,  
And in the field behind, bent double still,  
The aged owner picking up his crop,  
A few potatoes in a dirty sack,  
Against the solemn uprights of the pines.

## Efficiency

WE have a cabinet maker in our town  
Who learned his trade in Italy, and loves  
More than the sight of some rare Chippendale  
To reproduce a piece himself, with here  
And there some little change that more refines,  
Or scroll and pattern of his own design.  
You cannot hurry him; he works by hand  
And like an artist broods the plan, to saw  
And scrape with happy haste when all goes well,  
To put a job aside for weeks, perhaps,  
When something else of more appeal turns up—  
Which is not good for business, of course.  
I often work beside him in his shop,  
Using his tools and his advice, and while  
I make some clumsy chair or mirror frame,  
He brings a lovely high-boy into life  
And vents his scorn on furniture that comes  
From "Meecheegan," turned out upon machines,  
Or tells me how in Italy, at home,  
"You want a t'ing, you tell the cabinet man,  
He make you what you want, it is all yours;  
And in his shop seventy-five, maybe,

## EFFICIENCY—(*Continued*)

Maybe a hundred boy all work and learn.”  
Alas! he has but one to learn from him;  
The rest are turning lathes in “Meecheegan”—  
Unthinking cogs in that machine which is  
Our new industrial efficiency.

The other day, besides myself and Joe,  
The lad, a third had come to tinker there,  
So four of us were busy at our work.  
The pungent shavings curled up through my  
plane,

Joe’s saw was singing in a tight-grained board,  
A hammer rang, a chisel bit the wood—  
And Tony suddenly looked up and laughed:  
“Some busy, eh?” he cried. “I like it so!  
I like it when the shave they pile up fast;  
In my home, Italy, we work like that,  
Seventy-five, maybe, all make somet’ing  
Himself, the legs an’ arms an’ seat an’ back!”

His chisel bit the wood again, and he,  
With smiling face and eyes that saw far off,  
Began to sing, “*Donna e mobile.*”

## Values

OLD Jones was pruning grapevines by his house,  
The house we'd come to see, perhaps to buy.  
The road up from the town was deep with mud,  
The early winter mud of our bleak land;  
We hadn't passed a house for near a mile  
Save one, and that abandoned to the storms:  
We'd mounted steadily, with clearer view  
Of hills and valley and the windy sky,  
Toward Jones's farm, against the mountain wall,  
With growing terror at the cost of coal  
That must be hauled so far by such a road.  
And then we saw the house, the porch caved in,  
The shingles split and curled, the upper rooms  
Mere cubby holes below the eaves, a house  
So small it could be tucked inside the barn—  
And would have gone away again, if Jones  
Hadn't spied us out and come with hobbling  
feet  
Down to the rotted gate.

His feet were shod

In felt-top rubber shoes, his stubbly beard  
Was brown and yellow with tobacco juice

VALUES—(*Continued*)

Around his mouth and chin—elsewhere 'twas  
white;

His coat was patched, his trousers at the knees  
Bagged to the contour of his aged bones.

"It's a good place," he said. "My father cut  
Nigh on ter forty ton o' hay deown thar  
Acrost the brook. 'Course, I ain't fertilised  
Much ez I should; my keows, 'cept one, is gone.  
The heouse is good, though 'twouldn't harm it  
none

To hev a coat o' paint."

"How much?" said we.

"Six thousand dollars an' the keow thrown in."

"The man is mad!" she whispered in my ear.

He did not hear—his look was far away.

"The place hez always b'longed to one of us,"  
The old man mused. "I couldn't let it go  
Fer less, an' all thet medder hay, an' woods,  
An' summer folks a-payin' fancy sums  
Fer farms thet ain't a patch on this one here."

The woods had been stripped bare of pine ten  
years

Or more ago; the meadow mowing now  
Was stiff with telltale stalks of Queen Anne's  
lace;

The house was rotting at the sills. But he,  
A last dred of the Puritans, saw what

**VALUES—(*Continued*)**

It once had been, and what the accident  
Of mere possession might bring in to him,  
In spite of his neglect, if some fool man  
With money itching in his pocketbook  
Should take a fancy to it. So he dreamed,  
And we departed down the muddy road,  
Leaving behind what seemed to us a ghost,  
A poor, pathetic, stubborn ghost, of those  
Who were the breed of Yankee pioneers.

### **In Union Square**

A WIND blast of fine snow had scoured the walks  
In Union Square until they wore a glaze  
More treacherous than ice. My collar up,  
My head bent low to face the gale, I strode  
To reach the warm wood fires at a club  
Not far beyond, and dinner with my back  
Against a glowing grate. Midway across  
The park I saw a woman slip and fall,  
And with a crash her burden of split boards  
Went down beside her and slid sprawling out.  
Of course I hurried to her side, intent  
To see if she were hurt, and got my hands  
Beneath her arms, and lifted her—a load  
So light I braced for twice the needed pull—  
And set her on her feet. She was not hurt,  
But, God! she hurt me as her eyes met mine!  
The gratitude of some stray cur was there  
When he expects a cuff and gets a bone,  
And licks your hand and will not go away.  
What had I done to earn a look like this?  
Then suddenly I saw! A dozen men  
Were passing by, like me, and not a one

### IN UNION SQUARE—(*Continued*)

Had more than turned his head; only a boy,  
Ragged as she, had left his box of wood  
And now was gathering into a pile  
Her scattered load of broken boards. They say  
America has made its women queens;—  
And this dumb creature in her threadbare black  
Could only look at me, a well-dressed man,  
As homeless dogs look up when they are fed  
And coaxed by kindness to forget their fear!  
She had no gloves; her red and claw-like hands  
Showed splits between the knuckles like raw  
wounds:

Her coat would not have kept a kitten warm.  
I could not speak—a choke was in my throat,  
A pity fierce and hot had clutched my heart.  
I only put her load beneath her arm  
And in her hand what money I could spare,  
And ran, a coward, from her grateful eyes.  
I felt a guilty, helpless thing;—my guilt  
That I should be a partner in the crime  
Of making any woman anywhere  
Amazed at chivalry, and making, too,  
The poverty that sinks to taking alms;  
My helplessness that I should be but one  
Of all the millions guilty of this crime.  
“Oh, God,” I prayed, “make me not to forget  
This aching pity that is at my heart,

**IN UNION SQUARE—(*Continued*)**

Make me to fight against the monster, Greed,  
And help to bring the day of Brotherhood,  
When none shall go in furs till all are clad,  
When in America there are no queens,  
But every woman holds her head erect,  
The happy mistress of a happy home!"

### **My Friend**

THE friend I love is like the sea to me,  
With spacious days of large tranquillity  
When on my heart his wordless comforts lie,  
As on the utter sea rim rests the sky;  
And like the sea for wrath he is, and strong  
To launch his surges on the cliffs of Wrong;  
But most I love him for his deep-sea spell  
Of unguessed secrets that he may not tell:  
So I have seen him stand and look afar  
Beyond the twilight to the evening star,  
And like the ocean's haunting lure to me,  
Deep in his eyes I read a mystery:—  
For he whose soul we fathom to the end  
Becomes our servant then, and not our friend.

**“I Asked of Love—”**

I ASKED of Love no other thing than this,  
That he should lead me once unto her kiss  
Whose lips in dreams o'er my lips slowly bent:  
But he for answer led me to a place  
Where I forgot the image of her face,  
And kissed an earthly sweetheart well content.

## Transformation

SHE came up the pasture slope  
With sunlight in her hair,  
And so I took her by the hand  
And saw the world was fair.

She came through the city streets  
And smiled upon my frown,  
And so I kissed her on the mouth  
And straight forgot the town.

### In the Cathedral

A step, a portal's welcoming—  
We leave the human stream:  
Thinly the hidden voices sing,  
The altar candles gleam;

Like stars they shine about the feet  
Of Him men crucified;  
Aloft the springing columns meet  
In arches multiplied,

In arches graceful as the bend  
Of saplings under snow;  
High in each lofty transept end  
The great rose windows glow;

The kneeling worshippers are few,  
Like shadows in dim grass,  
And on their hearts is dropped the dew  
Of comfort, ere they pass.

O great cathedral, solemn, high,  
A shelter from the world,  
Your fan vaults are a second sky,  
In twilight purple furled.

IN THE CATHEDRAL—(*Continued*)

I bless you for your dusk retreat,  
That meant for me—just this:  
Not ten steps off the teeming street  
I won her precious kiss!

### **When Stella Wades**

A CAT bird calling in the brush  
To break the still noon's sleepy hush,  
A lazy, gliding little boat  
That creeps in where the grasses float,  
And dreams of idling happy days  
Through endless winding water ways,  
A clear pool brown on yellow sand  
With alder screens on either hand—  
And white feet in the water there,  
And bronze lights in your sun-filled hair!  
The water that has kissed your knees  
Runs on beneath the arching trees,  
And babbles of its happy lot  
To every shallow, pebbled spot,  
Until at last it joins the sea  
To chant the breakers' litany,  
Where, 'twixt the moon and evening star,  
The long waves sing how sweet you are.

### My Hope

WHEN first at dawn I saw you stand  
Against the sunshine in the window square,  
A dew-glossed morning-glory in your hand,  
    And in your hair  
    The ripples of the morning air,  
The sweetness of you overcame my eyes,  
Nor from my lips would your sweet name arise,  
    You were so fair.

Since that time many a dawn has crept  
With song of birds and rosy flush of light  
Into the still, cool chamber where we slept,  
    And to my sight,  
    After the dream scenes of the night,  
Has come the realised image of your face,  
And white-robed body moving with the grace  
    Of angels bright.

So when the dream scenes of this world  
Are scattered by God's morning bursting clear,  
And like a scroll our little lives are furled,  
    How shall I fear,

**MY HOPE—(*Continued*)**

Who all the night have felt you near  
To rouse me with renewed betrothal kiss,  
To make each sunrise a new dawn of bliss,  
And Heaven more dear!

“What Have I Brought?”

WHAT have I brought you, dear,  
Who gave me love and strength and counsel  
wise,  
And girt me for my high emprise?  
I come before you bowed with fear.

I have so little done  
Of all I dreamed to do in pay,  
And evening shadows dusk the day,  
To warn the laggard of the failing sun.

Will you at twilight stand  
Against the West, like my avenging Fate,  
To bar the thrice desired gate,  
A flaming sword in your soft hand?

Ah, no, not that, dear heart!  
The close-companions, striving years, -  
The closer comradeship of tears,  
You will not put away for baser part—

Nor count the fame you missed  
Against the glory of the love you found,

"WHAT HAVE I BROUGHT?"—(*Continued*)

That folded you forever round  
In silences where angels kissed.

Just for that love I bore,  
Who gave naught else but love to thee,  
You will be very kind to me,  
And stretch your waiting arms from Eden's door.

## Responsibility

Her hands lay clasped about my neck, her face  
Looked up to me with that sweet smile it wears  
When she has mind to speak of grave affairs,  
And buys a hearing first with her embrace.  
"I fear you love me, Dear, for some stray grace  
You find in me of voice or form," she said,  
"For there is little wit in my poor head  
To gain within your deeper thoughts a place;  
But, Love, I love you so that I can be  
In all things that I learn from you, your mate,  
No better and no worse—Ah, Sweet, the weight  
Of my small soul lies on you heavily!"  
Then came her tears. I kissed her silently,  
But in my heart I cried, "O God, the weight!"

### The Woman's Kiss

“Tell me,” she said, as close to me she pressed  
And stroked my hair with her slim finger tips,  
“What did you feel when first I kissed your lips?”  
So tenderly I took her to my breast,  
This answer making to her sweet behest:—  
At first alone such sense-subduing thrill  
As in the vast of Heaven, starry still,  
Must come at sudden song-burst of the Blest.  
Then, when the first glad rapture was gone by,  
I saw my soul had walked abroad and grown;  
Above my head there arched a purer sky,  
Bright o'er a fairer land than I had known:  
And feeling there all selfishness depart,  
I knew that country was a woman's heart.

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### The Memory Hath Its Milestones

THE memory hath its milestones, deeply scored,  
Rare moments in the passing of the years  
When the pent soul its call to freedom hears:  
This day—one reads—the vision walked abroad  
Into a solemn western radiance poured  
Like balm of Grace upon cold death-bed fears;  
This summer noon unbidden came the tears;  
And once on midnight waters spoke the Lord.

Cut deep are these: but deeper, sweeter still  
The words, *I kissed you in a trembling hush,*  
*And your lips answered mine for all reply;*  
That stone stands up against a day-break sky,  
Transfigured, holy, in the mystic blush,  
Where the long roadway crests the highest hill.

### **Love's Doubt**

AND did I leave you but an hour hence,  
With your kiss warm upon my lips, your face  
A shadowed glory in that glimmering place  
Where subtle silence smote upon the sense  
Of being, till we were but one immense  
Hot heart throb of the pulse of Life, the race  
Of life blood through the arteries of space,  
Chanting the song of Love's omnipotence?

An hour? No, a day, a week, a year!  
Your kiss is cold upon my lips, your hair  
That crowned with dusk those brows which are  
so fair  
No longer thrills me with its feathered fire:  
Into my lonely chamber stalks a fear—  
Can kindled souls too eagerly aspire?

### **A Forgotten Garden**

WE stood within a garden long forgot;  
The city's clangour surged without unheard;  
Only the twitter of a nesting bird  
Deepened the silence of the drowsy spot:  
The sun across the weed-choked beds lay hot  
And still; the guarding poplars faintly stirred  
To whisper to the noon their silken word  
Of slumberous peace: for us the world was not.

Ah, heart that bleeds against the thorns of fate,  
The dust, the turmoil, and the prize forego,  
And seek and find and creep in through that gate  
Where you with Love may sweeter prizes win,  
Where poppies and neglected roses blow—  
A citadel of silence in Life's din.

### Quest

WE know not what we sought was Merlin's quest?  
We know not, nor much care: Old Merlin's dead,  
And green the grass grows o'er his hollow head,  
The secret of his search for aye unguessed:  
We only know that some divine behest  
In our hearts too hath breathed command and  
said—  
Be up and searching e'er the dawn is red,  
For scarce at evening shall you find your rest.

And so we sought till soothing darkness crept  
With soft enfolding arms and languid kiss  
Out of the East across the summer sea;  
And came no whisper where the waters slept?—  
“Thy search is ended, for the goal was this—  
Heaven foreboded in a memory.”

### **Twilight Meadows**

To east and west the river meadows lie,  
Alive with bent, brown grasses lifting slow  
Where treads the wind, invisible and low,  
Abroad beneath the solemn sunset sky:  
Long forest waves pour down on either hand,  
Dim billows faintly lit with autumn gold,  
That crest against the sky line sharp and cold,  
A bounding wall of darkness to the land.

Across a frost-filled, cloud-flecked sky the light  
Streams up and eastward to the rising night,  
And mystic union makes in deep-hushed space.  
So from my heart its purest fires arise  
To greet the dear, dusk longing in your eyes;  
Breathless we stand in sudden soul embrace.

### **Lost**

WHY should I weep for you to-night, poor child,  
Who followed but your nature's bent for ease,  
Turning from me as one too hard to please,  
To seek a love untroublesome and mild?  
God's temple in us is not thus defiled;  
The sins that damn are sterner stuff than these  
Poor failures of a timid soul to seize  
The challenge of a soul more free and wild.

And yet I think of you, still loved so well,  
As you would think of one gone down to hell:  
You chose the vale who might have walked the  
height,  
You scorned the purple for the common grey;  
So, dear, I weep for you this bitter night,  
Who sleep so safe and warm so far away!

### **The Lover Speaks**

THERE is a girl whom I know well  
Over the hill by the edge of town,  
And she looks forth till I come to her;  
But I linger here on the wind-swept down.

What with the wind and sun and sky  
There's hardly room in my mood to-day  
For the give and take of human speech,  
For intricate passions' interplay.

Have you never watched a child alone,  
A comradely smile on its little face,  
Prattling to spirits by you unseen,  
And felt an intruder within the place?

So my soul speaks with the sun and wind,  
And my smile greets the wind and sky,  
To the whispered word of the old green earth  
My lone ear listens secretly.

Yet I shall crest the hill at last  
With joyous feet to the girl I love,  
By some irresistible impulse driven  
Like homing birds in the blue above.

THE LOVER SPEAKS—(*Continued*)

And she will greet me with reproach  
For lingering on the road so long,  
Then give me of her lips to kiss  
And charm my spirit with her song.

And 'twill be very sweet to slip  
Into the chains of love once more—  
Yet sweet to think that the soul can fly  
When the wind comes knocking at the door.

## Thought

THE night comes on, he cried, when paths must  
part

And each soul, lonely, while the slow tears start,  
Toil darkly on unto a lonely bed.

*The day is very long and sweet, she said.*

The ways of death are wonderful and dread  
And man must face them with uncovered head,  
And solemn thoughts born of a solemn fear.  
*The ways of life are wonderful and dear.*

And yet, he said, a moment may be ours  
To loiter languid through the fading flowers  
That with the summer, like ourselves, must die.  
*Too late, she sighed, the moment has gone by.*

### **Awakening**

A ROSE glow glims the western wall,  
The sweet night faints to dawn,  
And from the folds of outer dark  
Another day is born.

So I must rise and greet the world  
As it were still the same,  
As if my Love herself could rise  
And answer to her name.

And I must fret and smile and toil  
Where alien faces teem,  
Ere night will come again with stars  
And bring again my dream.

### **Life, the Temptress**

“EMBRACE me, I am Love,” she said,  
And white her bosom gleamed;  
Its half-hid, pallid marble seemed  
To mock her ripe mouth’s riper red.

“Have pity, I am Life,” she said,  
“What hast thou done to me?”  
Her mouth was pale as corpses be,  
Ah, God, but her struck bosom bled!

### **The Old Poets**

WHOSE footsteps never strayed across  
The bridge that spans Life’s border stream,  
Unknowing, never count the loss  
Of those dim landscapes of the dream:

But we whose feet once sped afar  
Athwart the wind-swept slopes of dawn,  
Or drove beneath the luring star,  
Sit by our prosy hearths and mourn.

### Opportunity

YEARS passed and the hair was grey,  
Then power came and will;  
But in the bosom of the Man  
The voice of Youth was still.

### Romance

THE rising curtain shall roll up the years,  
Till youth defies the tyranny of fact,  
And art restores by ages-old compact  
The pain of laughter and the joy of tears.

### **Middle-Aged**

THE clock is saying "Midnight" to the moon,  
While I stare blankly at my blank white pad,  
And cannot write one line of loveliness  
Before I sleep, one line to tell the world  
My eyes have seen, my heart has felt to-day  
A beauty on the grey November hills,  
A flush of greeting on a woman's face,  
To sing itself immortal in a phrase.  
I only smile at my own vanity—  
"Immortal," what a word to use!—and yawn  
'And go to bed. So ends a prosy day.

### **Pan on 'Change**

HERE to this roaring street,  
Shut in by granite walls that dwarf the day,  
Where thousands meet  
With secret weapons for the open fray,  
Came singing songs and piping dances wild  
A minstrel child.  
They heard him not who hurried on so fast,  
Or hearing had no time to understand;  
But he shall pipe triumphant at the last—  
When bare about him lies the wasted land.

### **Italy**

THE burdened beauty of the centuries  
Lay heavy on this land, whereto we came  
With harp-strung hearts to catch its antique  
song—  
The song we heard was fresh as Eden's dawn.

### **The Deep-sea Porters**

THE endless billows lay their burdens down  
On barren beach and by the busy town;  
By night and day, while tired mortals sleep  
Or while the sun track dances on the deep,  
Up from the world rim tramp the sleepless host  
And quick receding in the deep are lost;  
No word they speak save one sad, ceaseless moan,  
As if of toiling they were weary grown,  
Of age-long wayfaring by ancient tempests tossed.

### Rude—For a Picture

THE grass was soft along her naked side,  
And on the brown pool where the ripples died  
    Her white reflection lay;  
Her lids were closed against the noon-tide  
    heat,  
The little star flowers white about her feet  
    Where not so white as they.

And no rude satyr, leering through the leaves,  
Disturbed the spell that dreamy slumber  
    weaves  
    When summer's sun is high—  
The spell that woke a smile upon her lips,  
And idly stirred the rosy finger tips  
    Which rested on her thigh.

Her bosom's curve was sweeter than the curl  
Of crested wave, or sea-worn, perfect pearl;  
    And sweeter than the line  
Of far blue mountains low against the west,  
Lay cool and straight within their grassy nest  
    Her slender limbs supine.

NUDE—FOR A PICTURE—(*Continued*)

Was she some happier Eve in Eden bower,  
Where never serpent coiled round fruit or flower,  
    Nor voice of God was heard?  
Or was she Beauty's self, who flees afar,  
Mocking from hidden dell or furthest star  
    Or voice of sky-borne bird?

We know not, nor in this world shall we know;  
Only that summer day she slumbered so.

## The Canal—Princeton

BELOW the stately college  
That crowns the swelling hill,  
It wanders by the lake side,  
Sober, slow and still;

Free of the smoky city  
Where tall warehouses penned,  
Forgetful of the city  
Where its far courses end;

Idly it dreams of summer,  
Of wandering winds that sigh;  
And in its placid bosom  
It holds the summer sky.

The white, clean lock is empty  
Beneath its willow tree,  
And on the bridge the keeper  
Sits dozing peacefully;

The cloud craft trail their anchors  
Across the lifting hill,  
The paddle drips, and faintly  
Buzzes a distant mill.

THE CANAL—PRINCETON—(*Continued*)

I watch your dear face soften  
And lose its tired frown:  
Ah, Love, how life grows sweeter,  
But fifty miles from town!

### On the Summit

ONE final panting push and pull,  
    One dash along the ledge,  
And on our sight burst fair and full  
    The blue world to its edge;  
  
Its edge that ringed us where we stood  
    Alone beneath the sky,  
'Above the plain, above the wood,  
    Above the wild bird's cry.  
  
We counted sleepy towns that hid  
    Along the river ways,  
We hailed Monadnoc's pyramid  
    Against the northern haze.  
  
The Berkshires huddled shadow-gloomed  
    Into the sinking sun,  
Only their royal summits loomed  
    And kindled one by one—  
  
And kindled into amethyst  
    Each with a crown of gold,  
The mountain monarchs keeping tryst  
    As in the days of old.

ON THE SUMMIT—(*Continued*)

The valley lights came out below,  
The stars came out above,  
The darkness gathered soft and slow  
Like God's enfolding love.

At last there was no world to see;  
Buoyed on the midnight deep,  
Two night guests of Eternity,  
We lay down to our sleep.

### **A Song from Broadway**

I'm tired of these clang ing streets,  
I'm weary of Broadway;  
I want to hear a hermit thrush  
Sing at the close of day.

I don't care what becomes of art,  
Nor how the market goes;  
I want to smell the leaf mould where  
The sky-blue gentian blows.

I meet a million faces here  
And hate them every one;  
I want to hide my face in moss  
And simmer in the sun.

I'm sick of all this smell of dust,  
I'm sick of tainted air;  
I long to feel the mountain wind  
Come lifting through my hair.

How deep the star-lit nights and cool,  
How bright the days and sweet,  
Back where the upland meadows spread  
Their velvet for my feet!

### A SONG FROM BROADWAY—(*Continued*)

A twilight hush enfolds the world,  
The mountain shadows creep  
Across the wood, across the fields,  
The couriers of sleep.

Only the crickets' elfin chimes,  
Like sleigh bells in the grass,  
Shall number for my drowsy ear  
The hours as they pass.

A blessed stillness steals my sense,  
My heedless footsteps stray . . .  
A honk, a cry, a hectic throng—  
I'm walking on Broadway!

## The Lilac

THE scent of lilac in the air  
Has made him drag his steps and pause;  
Whence comes this scent within the Square  
Where endless dusty traffic roars?  
A pushcart stands beside the curb,  
With fragrant blossoms laden high;  
Speak low, nor stare, lest we disturb  
His sudden reverie.

He sees us not nor heeds the din  
Of clanging car and shuffling throng;  
His eyes see fairer sights within,  
And memory hears the robin's song  
As once it trilled against the day,  
And shook his slumber in a room  
Where drifted with the breath of May  
The lilac's sweet perfume.

The heart of boyhood in him stirs;  
The wonder of the morning skies,  
Of sunset gold behind the firs,  
Is kindled in his dreaming eyes:

THE LILAC—(*Continued*)

How far off is this sordid place,  
As turning from our sight away  
He crushes to his hungry face  
A purple lilac spray!

## On Being Waked by a Factory Girl Singing

You wake me with your shrill soprano,  
Sloe-eyed Yiddish maid,  
Singing as you hem a coat sleeve  
    Or turn a strip of braid;  
I lie in bed and curse your tumult  
    That spoiled my morning rest,  
And wonder who on earth concocted  
    That early-rising jest;  
He may get up what time it please him—  
    For that, and so may you—  
But by what right do you compel me  
    To lose my best sleep, too?  
Confound you, it's a beastly outrage. . . .  
    But what is that you sing—  
A queer, outlandish, Slavic folk-song,  
    A plaintive, minor thing?  
Perhaps they sang it in the steerage  
    To soothe your eyelids down,  
Perhaps for you it means the homeland  
    In this great, homeless town!  
My broken dreams were of a homeland

ON BEING WAKED BY A FACTORY GIRL  
SINGING—(*Continued*)

Afar from these drab walls,  
Where woodlands spread, and on the grasses  
At night the sweet dew falls;  
My fellow in the prison city,  
I rise to face the day,  
And humbly send my prayer for pardon  
Across the area-way!

### To a Face, on the Rialto

Lost shepherd of some flock on the hills,  
Why do you haunt me with those dream-  
dimmed eyes?  
Why does your face out of a thousand leap,  
Here where the moon in sickly lamplight dies?

Over your pasture slope that low moon wanes,  
And soft against the hill the white sheep stray,  
Where feathered shadows lie upon the grass;  
—But you see not for gazing on Broadway.

Under fantastic lights you pass, like us,  
A painted scene and painted folk to view:  
But in your eyes the stars are mirrored deep,  
And underneath your feet you feel the dew!

### **Washington Square, North**

RED-BRICKED and sunny in a cheerful row,  
Unboastful of the beauty they possess,  
These ancient houses face the square; the stress  
Of commerce from the nervous town below  
Swept 'round and far beyond them long ago;  
Upon their view the high warehouses press;  
But they abide in their old-worldliness,  
And time with them moves graciously and slow.

Not otherwise when time and age advance  
May I look forth on some green spot in life,  
And keep the world aloof to see the sun,  
And hold the children in a kindly glance,  
Thus peacefully to pass out from the strife,  
Unsoiled, unwearied, when my day is done.

### **The City Pigeons**

THE doorway of their coop unloosed, they spring  
Straight up above the roof-tops noisily;  
An instant pause, a sudden swoop of glee,  
Then high against the blue on tireless wing  
Their wide-expanding, perfect circles fling;  
From that great height they look to open sea,  
The far green woods smile up invitingly;—  
But still the keeper counts their homecoming.

So on a day the human spirit flies  
Its prison house of daily, dull routine,  
To feel the rapture of the upper skies  
And see the world lie in a hush of green:  
But ever comes the spirit back once more  
And the grim Keeper smiles and bars the door.

### **Sunrise from the Jersey Shore**

ACROSS the salt-cool, restless river way  
Manhattan stands up ragged on the sky,  
Each crag-like tower lined majestically  
Against the kindling east, each building grey  
A ruddy herald of the new-born day;  
The canoned cross streets where the night lamps  
die  
Are sun-pierced gorges to eternity;  
And high above the cloudy smoke plumes play.

Ah, fretful man, the beauty is not thine!  
Thy stubborn will upflingest steel and stone,  
But mightier Nature claims once more her own;  
She yields to thee her quarry and her mine—  
With thy small mounds to mimic mountain  
heights,  
To clothe thy bareness in her morning lights!

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### **Mrs. Fiske as Hedda Gabler**

You saw him sit with vine leaves in his hair  
While your dark angel snared his soul to hell;  
Your mocking laughter was his funeral knell;  
And when Death brought its load for you to bear,  
With scornful face victoriously fair,  
The lip-line curling till the corners fell,  
You lightly gave what most men dearly sell  
And tossed your life to answer Death its dare!

We should of course dub you a shocking thing  
Since neither woman's soul was yours, nor heart:  
And yet for this we feel the slow blood start,  
And thank you, while our pagan pulses sing,  
Who such magnificent defiance hurled  
At that colossal bore we call the World!

### **Pinero's "Iris"**

FROM act to act we followed her, as straight  
The drama moved to its appalling end;  
Too well we knew no angel would forfend  
This passion's plaything from her utter fate;  
We heard behind her jar the closing gate  
Which, letting out, lets in no more till death;  
Round our souls too there rushed with tainted  
breath  
That cloven-footed world of lust and hate.

The sullen curtain rolled between at last:  
Silent we rose, and silent still we passed  
Into the night, and sought each other's eyes;  
"My Love"—the words shook slow as when one  
wakes  
From pain—"we shall forget when morning  
breaks!"  
But God's calm stars were sadder in the skies.

### **The Coward**

THEY say that character results from this,  
That we have lived misfortune down, grown grey  
In breeding hopes for hopeless Time to slay,  
Greeted calamity as with a kiss,  
And on the lone grave of our cherished bliss,  
When we have laid our poor dead dreams away,  
Have only paused a moment there, to pray,  
And then passed on, nor deemed the world amiss.  
A strong man takes his strokes, waxing more  
strong;  
The coward heart demands immunity,  
Nor dares to lay his dead beneath the sod,  
Nor craves to live when life has lost its song?  
If this be so there is no strength in me,  
I cringe a coward at the feet of God.

## The Search

I MET the soul of a little child  
Wandering on the earth;  
Its face wore neither an angel's smile  
Nor a human glance of mirth;

But only a look of troubled quest,  
As it had lost its way  
And knew not where to turn for help  
At the darkening end of day.

I spoke it gently: "Little child,"  
I said, and stooped to hear,  
"Why do you wander in the world,  
Is Heaven, then, not near?"

"Heaven? I never heard of that,"  
The sad-faced soul replied;  
"Is it a place where I might rest  
With others who have died?"

"It is a place where all souls rest,  
They tell us who still live;  
A blessed boon of joy and song  
Rejoicing God to give."

## THE SEARCH—(*Continued*)

“I do not know it,” said the child.

“I only know my feet  
Are weary with the endless search  
In market place and street,

All up and down the paths of men,  
Through peaceful ways and strife—  
The search for what I never find,  
The lost days of my life.

“I died when I was young,” it said,  
“To manhood never grew;  
I search and search with heavy heart  
For what I never knew.

Have you seen them—my unspent days?  
Find them I must,” it cried.  
“They were given me alone to live,  
To me, and then I died.

When I have found them, found my own,  
What need of Heaven then?  
God gave me days enough, I’m sure,  
With three score years and ten.

I do not ask for more than those,  
But they were mine to keep;  
When I have found my poor lost days  
I only ask to sleep.”

**THE SEARCH—(*Continued*)**

So speaking, turned the soul away,  
Wandering on the earth,  
With only a look of troubled quest  
On a face God made for mirth.

### **Little Nations**

A WILD old cat lives in our barn;  
She has three kittens  
And they are wilder still;  
They scurry underneath the hay  
When we attempt to coax them up  
Or give them milk;  
She's teaching them to capture mice  
—And birds:  
They will grow up into wild old cats  
And never know  
How good a hearth rug is, or patted fur.  
Of course we are annoyed—  
A cat should be subservient to man:  
But they are silly things  
And seem greatly to desire  
Just to be cats.

## Refugees

My motor headlights pierce the dark  
And make a racing revelation in the  
night;  
Speed and the rushing of wind,  
The flying ribbon of the road,  
The melting shadows and obscurity,  
Combine to build a dim dream world  
Of all the thrice familiar way,  
A hectic haste of midnight unreality.  
See! out of the dark in front,  
Madly, in terror,  
As if some Fate pursued,  
A scurry of little people rush,  
Across the road, into the dark again.  
On past the turn,  
And more small folk,  
Singly sometimes, again in crowds,  
Dash into the headlights' glare,  
And out once more,  
Made quick by nameless dread—  
The people of a city doomed to fall,  
The helpless refugees who hear

**REFUGEES—(*Continued*)**

**The tramp of armies unopposed. . . .**

**The autumn leaves**

**Swept by the wind across the tarvia!**

## **Lantern Shadows**

I WENT out across the yard  
A lantern in my hand,  
And the shadows of my legs  
Like great black shears  
Snipped at the high lights  
On the dim barn wall.  
Fantastic, angular, immense,  
These shadows troubled me—  
I saw them suddenly reveal  
The human gesture's vast futility.

### **The Parasite**

THE farmer who once owned my place  
Put wire fences  
All around the orchard,  
Fixed to chestnut posts  
With two-inch staples driven deep.  
Now I am tearing this fence down  
With bitter labour, post by post.  
He wanted to protect his apple trees from cows;  
I want a sweep of lawn beneath the blossom  
sprays.  
He tried to make the farm yield him a wage;  
I get my wage some other way—  
That's why I now am owner here.  
Meanwhile the cost of fruit and beef and milk  
goes up;  
Still, I shall have my lawn.

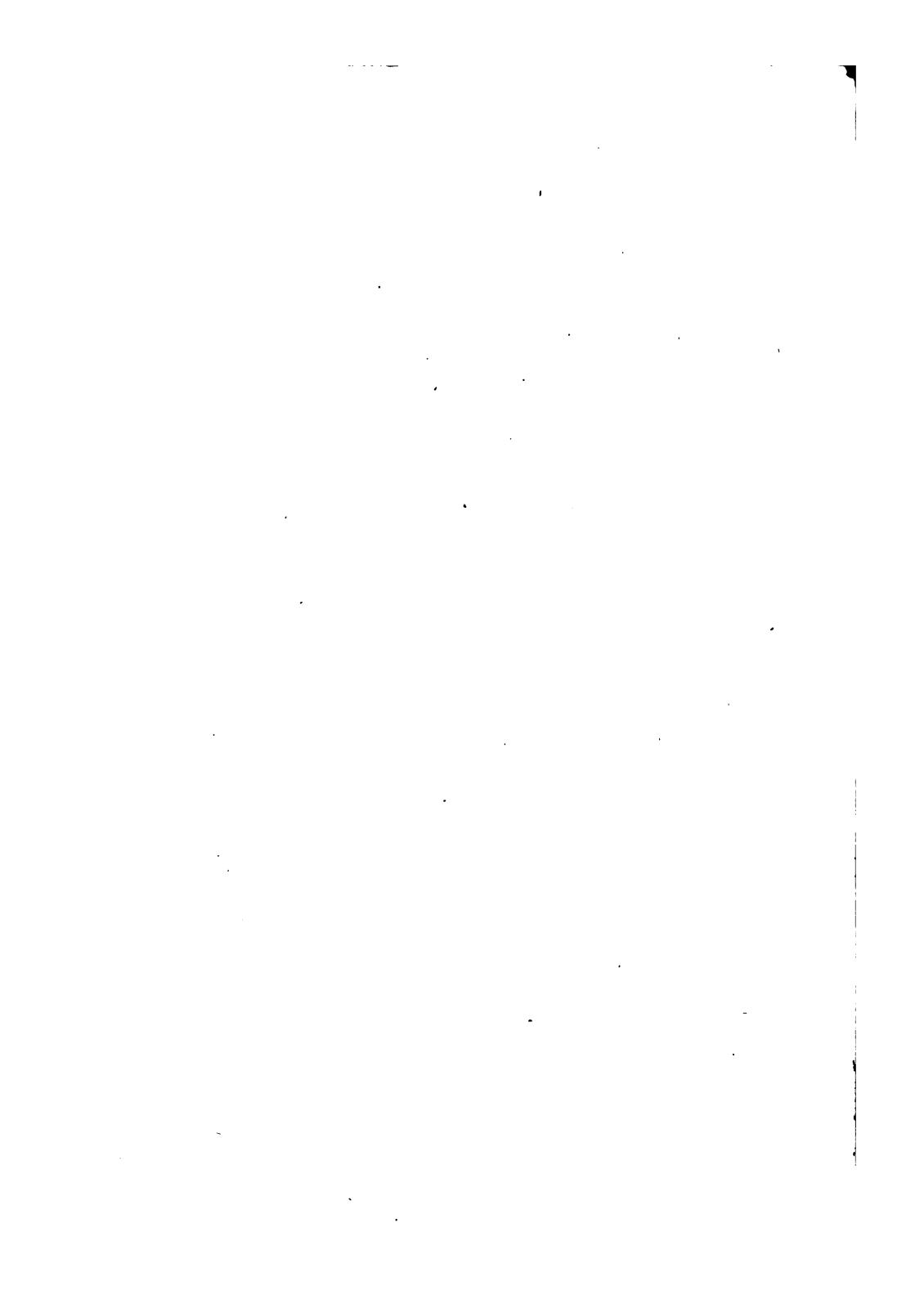
## **Home Coming**

TWILIGHT was creeping on—  
The hosts of darkness marching from the East,  
While in the West  
The last red banner of defeated day  
Was drooping, as the wind died down,  
Upon a sky-line cool with lemon gold.  
My snowshoes creaked on stiffening crust;  
A startled rabbit, scarce discerned,  
Scampered through rattling underbrush;  
And frozen silence wrapped the world.  
The valley lights were lit  
When I broke through a fringe of wood  
And saw below the snowy roofs of men.  
A thin, faint, fragrant smell of smoke  
Stung in my nostrils  
And made me pause to think  
How delicate our senses are in mountain air.  
Then quickly plunging down the slope,  
While darkness gloomed the trail,  
I came past fir trees where the pheasants roost  
To my back lot,  
And so, through naked garden paths,

HOME COMING—(*Continued*)

To where my study door  
Showed a red square against the night,  
With dancing flickers from the great birch log,  
And, crossing twixt the fire and door,  
The shadow outline of my Well Beloved.





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